

SENIOR STAFF  
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26 August 1964

PERSONAL

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. KIRKPATRICK

LBK

SUBJECT: Does All of CIA Equal the Sum of its Parts?

A week or so ago you asked for any ideas I might have on the usefulness of the present Senior Staff Meeting and on possible alternatives to such an institution. As you will see, I took you seriously. In fact, you may get more than you wanted.

Every large organization must have some vehicle for dealing with across-the-board problems and policies. Guidance and direction must uniformly be communicated from the top down; major difficulties and queries must be surfaced for resolution at higher levels. This is obvious, but to leave it at that begs a fundamental question: Is the Agency, in fact, a single organization? I am not sure of the answer - and I have been around as long as most. Let me elaborate.

The Agency, qua Agency, is a single identity, a whole, a unit, at the level of the DCI, DDCI, Executive Director-Comptroller, General Counsel, and Inspector General. But is this group a holding company with four (possibly more) subsidiary corporations? Or is it a single corporation with major divisions? To put it another way, one closer to home, is it like the Department of Defense with a central policy group and several separate Services? Or is it like the Department of State with major sub-units of a single Service? Perhaps none of these analogies fit. Perhaps we had better decide what we want the Agency to be and see if actuality corresponds with desire.

This is not the place and I am not the person to do an Organization Analysis. But for what it is worth, my own view is that, in practice, below the level of the Executive Director,

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there is less of a unitary, close-knit interrelated organization than most of us would like to see. To some extent this is a result of an over-zealous approach to compartmentalization and an exaggerated view that case officers are poor analysts, that analysts can't or won't become administrators, that laymen are above or beneath science and scientists, that economists can't write and that estimaters can't economize. Even if strict compartmentalization were necessary and rigidities in the movement of personnel were justified, there is still a level in the hierarchy below the one that now exists where senior personnel should have an Agency rather than a purely component perspective and responsibility.

It might be said that this level and this view is brought together at the Director's morning meeting. I would disagree. The composition of the group and the matters considered are geared to service the immediate and direct substantive and operational problems of the Director. This is an essential function, but not a substitute for a group and a forum for thrashing out Agency-wide problems that the Director need not yet, if ever, be concerned about or involved with.

It might also be said that the level of personnel currently attending Senior Staff Meetings provides the vehicle (I've gotten to your query, at last!). But the record denies this. Discussion (as opposed to "reports") is virtually non-existent; problems are rarely aired; participation is too often grudging, and attendance by senior members of the "Senior Staff" is erratic. Here, too, the key to the matter is number and composition - in this case, too many and too diverse.

I would eliminate the bi-weekly staff meeting. It's purpose could be served by an Executive Letter (Eyes Only, if necessary) to Chiefs of all Directorates, Offices, and Divisions. This letter could convey appropriate administrative, substantive, and operational information. A bi-monthly (or quarterly) conclave, possibly addressed by the DCI, would preserve the face-to-face advantage which is one important asset of the present Senior Staff Meeting.

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I would establish a Deputies Group, which would be broader and deeper than those currently attending the Morning Meeting, but would number no more than 15 persons including the DDCI and yourself. A proposed list:

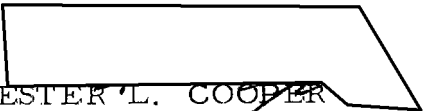
DDCI, ExDir, General Counsel, IG, DDI,  
A/DDIs, DDP, A/DDP, DDS&T, A/DDS&T,  
DDS, A/DDS

Depending on the matter to be discussed, other senior personnel (Chief, ONE, Chief Public Relations, Chief Budgeteer, Chief Security, Chief Medic, etc) could be requested to participate.

I would assemble this group bi-weekly; more often if necessary.

I would encourage (insist on) the frank airing of major problems, especially those touching other components. I would toss major Agency policies to the group for discussion. I would use this forum, in short, as the glue to construct a wider Agency model than the one now existing.

Naturally, there will be occasions and problems that lend themselves to more private discussion (e.g., you, the DDI, and the DDP). But, surely, there are enough more general and important matters to justify a group such as this - that is, if indeed CIA is an Agency and not a holding company.

  
CHESTER L. COOPER

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